

Total of 43 are arrested

A TOTAL of 43 people have been arrested in connection with the Dale Farm eviction.

Three have already appeared in court, while a further 37 remain on bail.

In addition, a 47-year-old man from Chelmsford has been charged with a public order offence and has been bailed to appear at Southend Magistrates' Court tomorrow.

A 23-year-old man from Devon was arrested in Peckham, South London, last Thursday on suspicion of committing a public order offence.

He has been bailed until December 5.

A 57-year-old woman from London, who was arrested for obstructing a bailiff, is on bail, pending further inquiries, until December 19.

Man to face no charges

A TRAVELLER arrested on suspicion of harassing a Crays Hill resident in the run up to the eviction has been released without charge.

John Sheridan, 34, from Oak Lane, Crays Hill, was arrested following an incident outside the home of Sally Aungier, of Crays Hill Residents' Association, in Gardiners Lane North, on October 5.

An Essex Police spokesman said: "A 34 year-old man from Crays Hill has been released without charge."

Driver bailed over assault

A TRAVELLER was arrested after allegedly driving a car aggressively towards bailiffs and council staff.

Jimmy Egan, 43, was arrested on Thursday on suspicion of assault and a public order offence in connection with the alleged incident at Dale Farm.

An Essex Police spokesman said: "A 43-year-old man from Crays Hill has been bailed."

Fire crews tackle blaze

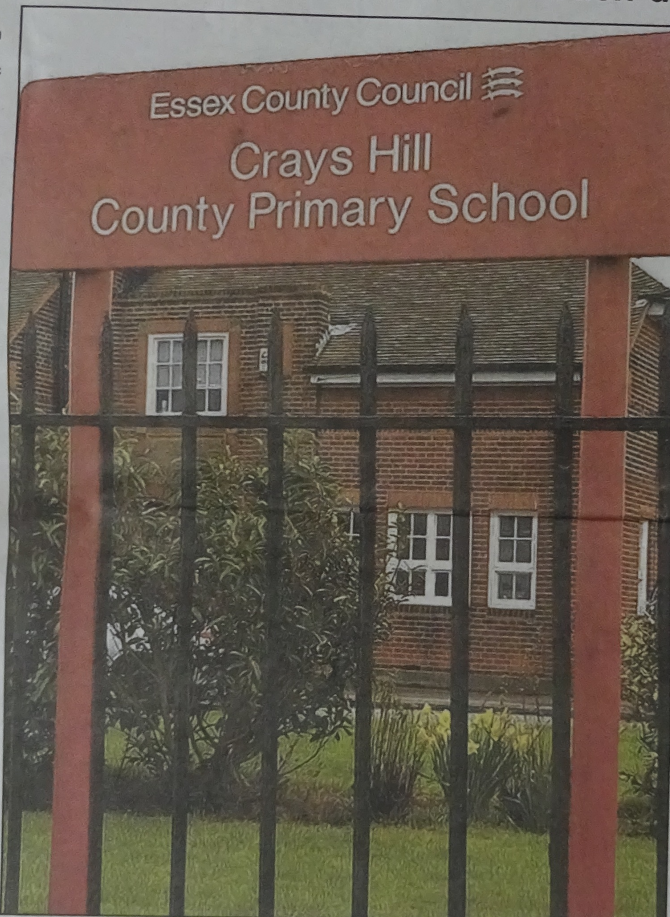
FIREFIGHTERS were called to the Oak Lane traveller site in Crays Hill after a fire was believed to have broken out in a derelict caravan.

Crews from Basildon fire station were alerted to the incident at 2pm on Saturday.

A spokesman for the fire service said: "Three machines attended the scene, due to the

Eviction sparks rise in pupil attendance

Average number of children each day at school doubles to 40



■ Uncertainty - the school

Picture: MAXINE CLARKE XEHBK1_E13

Bailiffs leave Dale Farm as all 51 pitches are cleared

BAILIFFS have left Dale Farm after all 51 illegal pitches were cleared.

Council leader Tony Ball said the council would turn its attention to four occupied pitches, left because of a technical error, and any overcrowding on the adjacent, legal site.

He said he hoped there would never be another Dale Farm and in future all travellers would seek planning permission before settling.

It comes after fears some travellers were returning to Dale Farm.

Two caravans pulled on to part of

Neighbour Len Gridley thought they were moving back on, but Mr Ball said: "We established that they were some of the caravans which are still entitled to be on the three pitches."

"They have returned from a visit to Ireland. They parked in Oak Lane because there is no longer access on to their pitches."

Mr Ball said they could not stay on Oak Lane and the council would not help move them to legal pitches as the timescale for that had expired.

MORE traveller children have been attending Crays Hill Primary School since the eviction at Dale Farm.

There had been fears Basildon Council's clearance of the illegal site could threaten the village primary following repeated claims there were up to 150 schoolchildren at Dale Farm - many of whom went to the school.

However, an Essex County Council spokesman said: "In the week prior to the eviction there was an average daily attendance of 20 pupils. Since the eviction and half-term this has increased to around 40."

She said the school believed there was a lull in attendance before the eviction due to there being so much uncertainty among the families.

However, many of those who left Dale Farm simply moved to the empty legal pitches next door.

It has also emerged that just 25 children on the school roll actually lived at Dale Farm.

Eighty were registered as living on the legal pitches.

David McPherson-Davis, a former governor of the school, said: "None of this

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adds up. As the legal pitches were empty for so long, how could there have been 80 children from there at the school?

"We were always told there were so many children's educations at stake at Dale Farm, but with so families moving on to empty legal plots, and now this, the question arises were some people at Dale Farm just saying they lived there?"

He also argued 40 pupils going to the school out of a roll of 105 was still "terrible".

The Echo contacted traveller campaigners Grattan Puxon, Candy Sheridan and Stuart Hardwicke-Carruthers, to question their claims that 150 schoolchildren were on Dale Farm.

However, we received no response.

The school roll fell from about 200 in 2004 after most village parents removed their children from the school following the influx of travellers.

It has recorded the worst attendance rates in the country ever since.

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